

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EA-09

AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 COME-00 AGRE-00 TRSE-00 /091 W

----- 012964

R 261740Z NOV 76

FM AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0961

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

UNCLAS STRASBOURG 214

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FR.

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT GISCARD D ESTAING IN STRASBOURG

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE STRASBOURG-PARIS AUTOROUTE, PRESIDENT GISCARD D ESTAING VISITED STRASBOURG NOVEMBER 26 AND ADDRESSED A GATHERING OF MAYORS, PARLIAMENTARIANS AND OTHER NOTABLES. THE PRESIDENT DIVIDED HIS SPEECH INTO THREE PARTS, REGIONAL POLICY AND THE FUTURE OF ALSACE, NATIONAL POLICY.

IN HIS REMARKS ON ALSACE, THE PRESIDENT STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ALLUDING TO THE DISSATISFACTION EXPRESSED BY THE MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF THE BAS-RHIN ON THE GUICHARD REPORT, PROMISED THAT NO REFORM WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WITHOUT THE WIDEST CONSULTATIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.

HE REVIEWED WHAT HAS BEEN DONE AND WHAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO DO IN ORDER THAT ALSACE CAN FACE THE VIGOROUS COMPETITION OF THE FRG. IN ADDITION TO THE NEW AUTOROUTE, HE PROMISED THE COMPLETION OF THE BEAUNE-MULHOUSE AUTOROUTE AND THE NORTH-SOUTH HIGHWAY FROM THE GERMANY TO SWITZERLAND. HE PROMISED INCREASED AID TO INDUSTRY PARTICULARLY IN THE NORTH-WEST PART OF THE REGION.

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HE SAID , THAT BECAUSE OF THE NEW AUTOROUTE, THE IMPROVEMENT OF AIRPORT FACILITIES AND THE PROMISE OF THE RHINE-RHONE CANAL, THAT STRASBOURG WILL BECOME A GREAT EUROPEAN METROPOLIS.

TURNING TO THE NATIONAL SCENE, THE PRESIDENT CALLED FOR SUPPORT OF THE BARRE PLAN, WHICH, HE SAID, ALONE COULD PUT FRANCE IN THE RANKS OF THOSE NATIONS WHICH CAN DOMINATE THEIR PROBLEMS , THAT IS THE U.S., THE FRG AND JAPAN. THIS REQUIRES DISCIPLINE AND SACRIFICE IF THE GOVERNMENT IS SUCCESSFULLY TO COMBAT BOTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION. STRESSING THAT FRANCE WITH A SMALLER POPULATION AND A LESS SOLIDLY ROOTED INDUSTRIAL TRADITION HAD ALREADY PASSED GREAT-BRITAIN ECONOMICALLY, HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THROUGH ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFORTS, FRANCE WILL SOON CATCH UP WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

IN DISCUSSING EUROPE, GISCARD STATED THAT STRASBOURG IS AND WILL REMAIN THE SEAT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. HE STATED THAT FRENCH EUROPEAN POLICY AIMS AT BRINGING ABOUT THE COMPLETE APPLICATION OF THE TREATY OF ROME AND AT COORDINATING AND BRINGING CLOSER TOGETHER THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

HE VOICED STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY ABSOLUTLY NECESSARY FOR FRENCH AGRICULTURE AND FOR A COMMON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY POLICY. HE REITERATED FRENCH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR AN ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

COMMENT: THE SPEECH WAS WELL RECEIVED. MOST OBSERVERS HERE AGREED HOWEVER THAT IT CONTAINED NO SURPRISES OR NEW POLICY DIRECTIONS. END COMMENT.ROMINE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STRASB00214
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760440-0247
From: STRASBOURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761111/aaaaaiyc.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2004 by castels>; APPROVED <22 NOV 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT GISCARD D ESTAING IN STRASBOURG ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE STRASBOURG-PARIS
AUTOROUTE, PRESIDENT GISCARD D ESTAING VISITED STRA SBOURG NOV
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, FR, (GISCARD D'ESTAING, VALERY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006